



**County of Los Angeles  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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**PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW**  
Director

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May 21, 2008

To Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Patricia S. Ploehn, LCSW  
Director

**MAY 13, 2008, PUBLIC COMMENT FROM GROUP HOME AND FOSTER FAMILY AGENCIES**

On May 13, 2008, representatives from eight group home or foster family agencies provided public comment during your Board's meeting. The consensus opinion of the representatives was the Department of Children and Family Services should lift a "hold" that was put on their agencies. After reviewing this matter, I confirmed the agencies had been placed on hold and I subsequently lifted the hold. For your information, I am providing the following details regarding this action, and addressing two other issues mentioned during the public comment.

The eight agencies providing public comment were informed on or about April 11, 2008, that their current contract would end on October 31, 2008. These agencies will not have a contract as of November 1, 2008, because they did not submit a Statement of Qualifications by the February 29, 2008, 6PM submission deadline. To minimize placement disruptions when the contracts end, DCFS informed the agencies we would not place additional children in their homes during the final months of their contract. Therefore, to prevent our staff from placing children with these agencies, DCFS put the agencies on "hold" status on the statewide Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS). Our placement managers ensured that a note was added to CWS/CMS which stated "No new placement. Agency's contract will expire October 31, 2008" and provided a contact person and phone number for more information. This hold status would not prevent any other county from placing their children with the agencies. At the agencies' request, I instructed my staff to remove the hold status from CWS/CMS. We will now carefully manage our placements to minimize the number of new children placed with the agencies.

Honorable Board of Supervisors

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Some agencies commented that they did not receive proper notice of the Statement of Qualifications submission deadline. We reviewed our noticing and advertising process for the Request for Statement of Qualifications and are confident that every agency represented at the Board meeting received proper notice of the deadline. In response to a May 6, 2008, Board motion, the Auditor-Controller is reviewing this contract solicitation process to determine if any corrective action is necessary. An Auditor-Controller staff person has confirmed that all of the representatives who gave public comment have been interviewed as part of the Auditor-Controller review.

Finally, one agency commented that the "hold" status prevents youth from returning to the same placement from where they ran away. A DCFS out of home care manager contacted the agency and explained that a runaway youth can return to their former foster home even under the "hold" condition if a special circumstance exists. Every situation will be evaluated to confirm that such re-placement is in the child's best interest.

I look forward to any further questions you might have on this matter. For more information, please contact me or your staff may contact Armand Montiel, Board Liaison, at (213) 351-5530. Thank you.

PP:am

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Chief Executive Officer  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Children and Families Well-Being  
County Counsel  
Auditor-Controller